



Dear Senator,

May 24, 2012

Thank you for allowing testimony on May 15, unfortunately our card was not one of the ones chosen so that we could voice our concerns while we were there and we will be out of town the 29th. So we will summarize our concerns over HB 4265 and 4266.

-We operate a privately owned compost facility on our Centennial farm in Livingston County. We compost yard wastes, manure and food waste averaging 25,000 cubic yards received annually. More than half of the finished product, compost, is sold or used on our farm.

-We will not be able to compete with the local landfill's rates for receiving yard wastes. They are able to set low prices that would drive us out of business. We don't consider that a "level playing field" or "free market". We are a small business that would be competing against the waste industry. Our 17 year old successful business will end and 11 employees will be out of work if these Bills pass.

-As farmers we believe these Bills are a threat to our ability to grow food locally in Michigan. We supply compost to community gardens such as The Greening of Detroit and The Greater Lansing Food Bank. At MSU's Student Organic Farm and several Certified Organic farms, we supply compost for those who have concerns over conventional farming and non-local sources of food. We have enjoyed seeing the optimism and excitement homeowners have in rural and urban areas in their ability to grow their own food in their backyard gardens. All of these farms and gardeners rely on compost to enrich the soil and make it productive.

-We firmly believe that organic material like yard waste has a best use. Creating a small amount of energy does not compare with the rich benefits of compost that these materials should be recycled into.

Sincerely,

Jim and Sandra Tuthill

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